

Competition Rule Q: British Schools Orienteering Championships

1. General Information

1.1 Nature of event

1.1.1 The British Schools Orienteering Championships (BSOC) is supported by the British Schools Orienteering Association (BSOA), whose objective is to boost participation in orienteering in as many British schools as possible.

1.1.2 The BSOC is held annually and is aimed at providing a good level of competition for school teams comprising junior orienteers of a wide range of ages and abilities. BSOC is primarily intended as a team competition.

1.1.3 The BSOC is a Level B event.

1.1.4 These Competition Rules are owned by the British Schools Orienteering Association (BSOA), which is the ruling body for this event.

1.1.5 Latest review was in January 2024.

1.1.6 Any questions regarding these Rules should be emailed to: rules@bsoa.org.

1.2 Date of Fixture

1.2.1 The British Schools Championships usually takes place during November, avoiding Remembrance Sunday.

1.2.2 The date and location of the event is determined by British Orienteering Event and Scheduling Group after consultation with the British Schools Orienteering Association. It will rotate around the country on a Regional basis.

1.3 Eligibility

1.3.1 Any School may enter a team in the British Schools Championships

1.3.2 School categories

- Primary: Years 5 and 6
- Middle/Prep: Years 5 to 8
- Large Secondary: Years 7 upward (601 or more on roll)
- Small Secondary: Years 7 upward (up to 600)
- Tertiary, 6th Form Colleges and Colleges of F.E

No competitor may take part who is older than 18 by the 31st August of the academic year of the competition.

Refer to Appendix 1 to confirm school category if in doubt.

1.3.3 All competitors must attend the school / college for which they are competing.

1.3.4 Home educated children are allowed to compete.

1.3.5 The competition is for school years 5 to 13. All children entered should be able to read an orienteering map competently and be confident in using basic navigation techniques. They should have competed in three events of an appropriate standard before BSOC. Younger competitors may take part at the discretion of the school if they are technically capable of completing a White course, but please note that shadowing of competitors is not allowed.

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- 1.3.6 Pairs may compete in years 5 to 8 (indicated by * in the course table in 3.4.1).
- They must stay together and cross the finishing line together.
 - If a pair contains two different age categories then they compete in the older age category
 - If a pair contains a boy and a girl then they compete in the Boys category in the age class of the oldest of the pair
- 1.3.7 If any child with 'special needs' wishes to compete in the BSOC a signed written statement from a senior member of staff at the pupil's school should be sent to the organiser as soon as possible detailing any extra special arrangement the school would like considered to enable the child to take part within the existing framework of the event. The organiser, in consultation with the BSOA Committee, will consider appropriate arrangements to enable the child to take part. They will look at both the health and safety issues and the interests of all participants.

1.4 Entries

- 1.4.1 Flyers will be produced as early as possible to advertise the event. Publicity should be sent to all junior publications.
- 1.4.2 Entry forms should be produced in electronic format and will be published on the BSOA web site, with links from British Orienteering and organising club web sites. In the previous summer term these will be emailed by the BSOA to schools that are members of BSOA.
- 1.4.3 Ideally all entries should be made via the school
- 1.4.4 The name and contact details of either the member of staff or responsible adult who will be supervising the children from the school in question on the weekend of the competition, and acting as a contact before and after the event, must be given on the entry form. They are expected to be responsible for their team members before, during and after the event and to help with any emergencies involving their children. Teachers and/or adults in charge of a school team may not enter the competition area (anywhere between the start and finish) whilst the courses are open without the permission of the organiser of the event.
- 1.4.5 Entries are by National Curriculum years as an example class G7 means girls from National Curriculum Year Seven (those having their 12th birthday between 1st September and 31st August during the school year in which the competition is held.)
- 1.4.6 Schools can enter up to 6 competitive entrants per age class. In the appropriate age class each entrant may be a pair of competitors. (Any extras will be accepted subject to availability of start times and must be declared non-competitive when entering).
- 1.4.7 Entrants may run up one, but not more than one, age class.
- 1.4.8 There should be a fixed closing date, late entries taken at the organising club's discretion, and no entries on the day.
- 1.4.9 Start times will be allocated by the entries secretary before the competition and e-mailed to the schools.
- 1.4.10 Due to the unpredictability of school teams, name changes are permitted on the day.

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2. Organisational Requirements

2.1 Location, Parking and Assembly Area requirements

2.1.1 If possible the event should be close to major road networks.

2.1.2 Parking should be as near to the assembly area as possible so that competitors can easily move backwards and forwards without danger. Ideally coaches should also be accommodated in the same area or very near to it.

2.2 Training day.

2.2.1 This is to be staged on the Saturday before the Championships. The format of this is flexible, however ideally it should use the same type of electronic punching and be on similar terrain to the Championships event.

2.3 Safety

This event has very specific and different safety risks, because of the relative inexperience and young age of the competitors and must conform to British Orienteering 'O' Safe and Good Practice guidelines. It is imperative that a safety officer is appointed for the whole weekend. Issues that he/she will need to be responsible for, or otherwise consider, will include the following:

- Competitors must be clothed in a manner to suit the conditions on the day:
 - Full leg cover (O trousers, tracksuit trousers or similar) is required. Not shorts.
 - Arm cover over at least the shoulders must be worn. Not running vests. Anyone not wearing the appropriate clothing must not be allowed to start.
- Whistles are compulsory for all competitors (BSOA are able to loan some).
- Provision of adequate first aid support.
- The preparation of, and if necessary implementation of, a search plan to locate missing competitors.
- The provision of "ask me" helpers in the area, to assist competitors. Such adults must be readily identified by competitors, so that there is no risk of them engaging with members of the public.

3. Planning Requirements

3.1 Terrain

3.1.1 The area needs to be suitable for children, either forest or parkland/forest with a good track and path network. Open fell or moorland areas are not suitable for this event. Neither are parks which are unable to offer anything beyond Technical Difficult 3 (Orange) standard courses.

3.1.2 The area needs to be large enough to provide courses with the required winning times as specified in 3.4.1.

3.1.3 Once an area is identified the normal British Orienteering Rules and Guidelines apply with regard to use of the area for other events, specifically in relation to juniors competing. This means that all parts of the competition area are out of bounds to all

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members of school teams entering the event, as well as staff and parents. This applies up to the date of the competition from 12 calendar months beforehand, or from the date on which the venue is published (whichever is shorter). Infringement of this or other rules of the competition renders any team concerned liable for disqualification.

3.2 Map

3.2.1 The map scale for the event should be 1:10,000 or 1:7,500.

3.2.2 A copy of the map of the area (not just an extract) should be sent to the schools entering so that they are familiar with the type of terrain before they come to the event. This can either be an old one with the “health warning” ‘this map is being updated’, or a copy of the new map.

3.2.3 If using SI electronic controls there should be appropriate boxes on the map for the use of back up punches.

3.2.4 One map is provided for each runner including both members of a pair.

3.2.5 Maps must be collected at the finish and only handed back after the last start time.

3.3 Control Descriptions

3.3.1 Control descriptions must be given in words for all courses and include any basic safety instructions as well as the course closing time.

3.3.2 Control Descriptions must be printed on the map.

3.3.3 Loose control descriptions should not be made available - many children do not have a means of carrying these which has led to litter problems in the past.

3.4 Course details

3.4.1 Age class technical standards and target winning times.

Class	Target Technical Level	Target Winning Time min	Class	Target Technical Level	Target Winning Time min
G5*	White	10 - 12	B5*	White	10 - 12
G6*	White	12 - 14	B6*	White	12 - 14
G7*	Yellow	14 - 16	B7*	Yellow	14 - 16
G8*	Yellow	16 - 18	B8*	Yellow	16 - 18
G9	Orange	18 - 22	B9	Orange	18 - 22
G10	Orange	22 - 26	B10	Orange	22 - 26
G11	Light Green	26 - 30	B11	Light Green	26 - 30
G12	Light Green	30 - 35	B12	Light Green	30 - 35
G13	Green	35 - 40	B13	Green	35 - 40

(White = TD 1; Yellow = TD2; Orange = TD3; Light Green = TD4; Green = TD5)
Pairs may compete in years 5 to 8, as indicated by *

3.4.2 No courses other than those for the competitors should be provided on the Sunday.

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3.4.3 Courses should be planned according to the above table and the BOF Guidelines. No further adjustments to the technical difficulty need to be made just because this is a Schools' Championships. This has already been allowed for in the table. However planners must remember that the competitors on these courses are amongst the best in the country, and take into account their running speeds when calculating the appropriate course length for each class.

3.4.4 Where a road crossing is required, and there are any concerns over safety, a manned control must be sited at the crossing point.

3.5 Start and Finish requirements

3.5.1 It is useful to have the start fairly close to the Assembly Area, although the start area itself should not be accessible to teachers, parents, etc.

3.5.2 It is likely that the event will require more than one start to cater for the different courses. The usual split is one for Girls and one for Boys.

3.5.3 The assembly area should be designed to give a good run in from the final control and to make the event feel 'special'.

4. Competition

4.1 Individual Awards

4.1.1 Boys and girls compete in separate classes.

4.1.2 Awards: - medals will be given to the first three competitors (or pairs as appropriate) in each of the 9 boys' and 9 girls' age classes.

4.1.3 Each competitor should receive a blank participation certificate on which to enter their name.

4.2 Team Awards

4.2.1 Teams Awards: - medals will be given to the first three teams in each of the 9 boys' and 9 girls' age categories. Best 3 scores to count.

Scoring is by competitor position in the results. The lowest total producing the winning team in each category.

Where teams have the same number of points the position of the last scorer determines precedence.

4.2.2 School trophies:

Primary (Years 5 & 6 boys and/or girls) Best 4 scores to count.

Middle / Prep (Years 5-8) Best 4 scores to count with at least 1 from Years 5 & 6 and 1 from Years 7 & 8

Large Secondary (Years 7-13) Best 9 scores to count from at least 3 years

Small Secondary (Years 7-13) Best 6 scores to count from at least 3 years

Tertiary (Year 12 or older) Best 3 scores to count

4.2.3 Complete teams will be placed above incomplete teams for results or awards purposes. Incomplete teams (of two or more competitors) will be placed in descending order of number of competitors.

4.2.4 Schools with only one competitor are not eligible for any team awards.

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5. Race Information

5.1 Start times

- 5.1.1 The start period is such that the final start time is at 12.30 p.m.
- 5.1.2 Start times should be at 1 minute intervals.
- 5.1.3 Competitors should be spread throughout the start period so that a similar number start at each minute interval.
- 5.1.4 Only one competitor from an age group should start at any one start time.
- 5.1.5 The minimum time gap between competitors from the same school on the same course should be 4 minutes for years 5-8 and 8 minutes for years 9-13.
- 5.1.6 Course closing times will be given in the final details and at the bottom of the control descriptions. Competitors should be advised that they should retire if they are still out on their course after 2 hours.
- 5.1.7 Competitors names and start times must not be published on the internet before the event.

5.2 Electronic punching

- 5.2.1 Electronic punching must be used, either SI or EMIT.
- 5.2.2 One e-card is required per individual or pair.
- 5.2.3 Competitors may use their own e-cards.
- 5.2.4 The e-cards should be supplied for all other competitors at no additional cost, and issued in the start lanes. (BSOA have 300 SI e-cards that can be borrowed free of charge). Traditionally Clubs/Regions have also been willing to lend extra SI / EMIT cards free of charge, (excluding postage and loss).
- 5.2.5 In the interests of fairness, contactless punching must be switched off unless all competitors are supplied with contactless cards.
- 5.2.6 Backup systems must be provided at each control; i.e. backup card for EMIT, standard pin punch for SI.

6. Other Information

6.1 Responsibility for the event

- 6.1.1 Individual clubs may offer to host the championships through their Regional Association representative on the British Orienteering Event Scheduling Group.
- 6.1.2 Any application to deviate from these rules must be made to the BSOA.

6.2 Officials

- 6.2.1 The officials for the event must meet the requirements set out for a Level B event in the British Orienteering Rules, Appendix C: Event Officials. In particular a minimum of a Grade B controller with experience of junior competitions.
- 6.2.2 The British School Championships requires a Planner who is experienced at planning good junior courses.
- 6.2.3 A Jury of appropriately qualified officials will be provided by the BSOA.



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6.3 Prize giving

6.3.1 Juniors like a good presentation ceremony. The area should be fenced off.

6.3.2 A PA system should be used.

6.3.3 If possible a local dignitary and/or young British elite athlete should be asked to present the prizes.

6.4 Finance

6.4.1 Endeavours should be made to keep the entry cost as low as possible whilst still maintaining the quality of the event.

6.4.2 The BSOA will provide all the required medals for the event.

6.4.3 The Event Organiser may be able to obtain support for the event from the O Foundation. Full details can be found on the British Orienteering web site, or contact the National Office for further information.

6.5 Support

6.5.1 The British Schools Orienteering Association provides mentoring support for this event. Contact the BSOA secretary for details.

6.6 Photographs

6.6.1 The BSOA appointed photographer will be present and take photographs in accordance with British Orienteering's O Safe Guidelines. These may be used on the BSOA/British Orienteering/Club websites.

Agreed by BSOA Committee: 1st January 2024

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Appendix 1- School definition

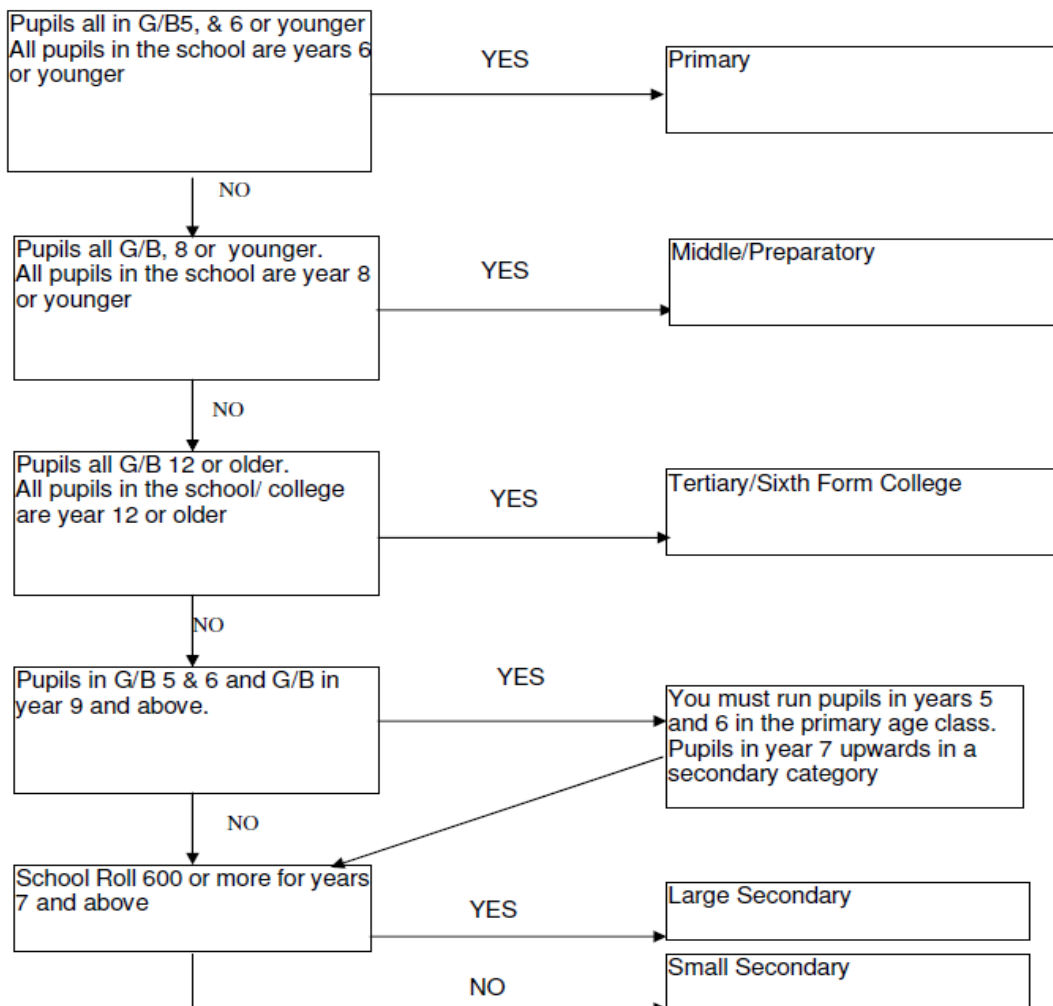
A school is defined as an institution under one Head teacher and one Governing body with one admissions register on which all names of their entrants appear.

The following chart refers to pupils in the school, not just those entered for the event.

Schools should enter the “Whole School Team” as follows:-

British Schools Orienteering Championship Flow Chart – School Categories

The following refers to pupils on the school roll, not just those entered for the event. Year groups refer to the normal d.o.b. ranges in English schools so any school which doesn't conform to those year groups should match their age range to the corresponding classes on the entry forms and then refer to the chart below. Therefore, for example, Scottish primary schools would normally fit into the Middle School age range. See also the notes below the chart. Schools should enter the “Whole School Team” as follows:-



In the event of any uncertainty as to which “Whole School Team” category to enter, please contact BSOA, who will resolve the matter.

NB A school should enter TWO “Whole School Team” Categories if they have pupils in years 5 or 6 AND years 9. i.e. one in Primary & one in the Secondary School Category.